

## **Statement: "The Future is Our Responsibility"**

We, the women of the Arab trade union organizations, meeting under the umbrella of the Arab Trade Union Women Network in Amman on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2014, on the margin of the Founding Congress of the Arab Trade Union Confederation, announce our condemnation of the humanitarian circumstances facing refugee women who are victims of wars and armed conflict in the Arab region. These have produced refugee camps in various parts of the Arab World, in which women constitute a majority, especially young women and children who are subject to rape, kidnapping, violence and early marriage, which has become their own way out of poverty and destitution in view of the absence of effective mechanisms of protection.

We strongly condemn the phenomenon of underage/early marriage in refugee camps and the exploitation of young women as a source of income, sometimes under the guise of protecting them from threats and sexual violence. We strongly reject the squalid circumstances of the refugee women, especially young women, who have been displaced from their homes and schools.

Arab trade union women and the ATUC, out of a sense of historic responsibility towards the squalid circumstances of the refugee women in the camps, issue a cry for help and demand the following:

1. Call on the international community to make refugee women a priority
2. Demand that the host Arab countries respect the international laws and conventions inside these camps

3. Create programs of economic empowerment and financial independence for refugee women
4. Call on donor organizations to support all programs created by the Network to achieve these goals
5. Work to provide protection and healthcare to women and children inside the camps.

This is on behalf of the representatives of the Arab trade union federations, ATUC affiliates and members of the Arab Trade Union Women Network.